

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FUND
Commission on Higher Education

Historical Poverty Resources

9A:11-2.2 Student Eligibility

(b) To be eligible for an undergraduate EOF grant, a student must demonstrate a history of poverty, which generally includes documented, long-term economic hardship of the family, such as little or no accumulation of assets and the inability to provide more than the basic needs of family members, as demonstrated by at least one of the following:

1. Having attended or graduated from a DFG A or B school district or an Abbott school district;
2. Having resided in a municipality that is a high-distress/labor surplus area, or is considered an eligible urban aid municipality, and/or is eligible to receive Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) from the New Jersey Department of Education;
3. Having resided in an area that historically has been populated by low-income families, such an area, commonly called a “pocket of poverty,” has characteristics of a high-distress/labor surplus area, even if the municipality is not formally so identified;
4. Having a sibling who was or is enrolled in an EOF Program;
5. Being a first-generation college student who is, or whose family is, eligible for government assistance and/or educational programs targeted toward low-income and disadvantaged populations (TRIO programs, free and reduced breakfast/lunch programs, food stamps); or
6. Having successfully completed a NJ GEAR UP state project or NJ college Bound grant program.

To assist you in identifying the first three EOF historical poverty criteria, attached are the following documents: (the lists of “School Districts Eligible for Early Childhood Program Aid” and “Eligible Urban Aid Municipalities” expands the high distress areas):

List of District Factor Group (DFG) A & B School Districts = 1

This list is created by the NJ Department of Education and is based on the 2000 census.

Non-Abbott Early Childhood Program Aid Districts = 2 or 3

In the Comprehensive Educational Improvement and Financing Act of 1996 (CEIFA), the governor, the legislature and the Department of Education (DOE) recognized the value of early childhood programs in low-income districts by creating new categorical aid called Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA). A school district with concentrations of low-income students above 20% of their student population is eligible to receive this aid for full-day kindergarten and half-day preschool for four year olds. The DOE has also included a few school districts with concentrations of low-income students below 20% as eligible for ECPA.

Eligible Urban Aid Municipalities=2

This list identifies urban municipalities that are eligible for programs administered by the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority (NJRA). The NJRA is an independent authority in the NJ Department of Community Affairs that functions as a comprehensive urban resource center. It invests financial and technical resources in redevelopment projects and plans that will create a positive economic impact in its eligible communities. NJRA's goal is to ensure that projects are urban-focused, neighborhood-based and investment-driven.

Abbott School Districts = 1

This list includes all of the New Jersey public school districts designated an Abbott district pursuant to P.L. 1999,c.110.

Labor Surplus Areas = 2

This list includes areas identified by the NJ Department of Labor and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics with an unemployment rate of at least 20% above the national average for the previous two calendar years. These areas are also eligible for Federal programs designed to provide assistance to impoverished, disadvantaged communities undergoing serious economic problems.

Please share these lists with the individuals responsible for developing the targeted recruitment plan for your EOF program.

Additional copies may be downloaded from our web site at www.state.nj.us/highereducation/eof.htm.

Should you have any questions regarding any of these lists, do not hesitate to contact the EOF program liaison assigned to your institution.